

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4497

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 6143

EXDIS

FROM US DEL LOS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: LOS: MALAYSIA-STRAITS AND ARCHIPELAGOS

1. US AND MALAYSIANS MET JULY 2 TO DISCUSS STRAITS AND
ARCHIPELAGO ISSUES. PARTICIPANTS AS FOLLOWS:

US - JOHN NORTON MOORE, BERNARD OXMAN, DR. ROBERT HODGSON,
CDR C. PAUL AKE

MALAYSIANS - ATTORNEY GENERAL TAN SRI DATO HAJI ABDUL KADIR
BIN YUSOF, CHAIRMAN OF MALAYSIAN DELEGATION TO LOS CONFERENCE,
MR. LAL VORAH, MR. YEOP ADLAN ROSE.

2. WE OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY EXPLAINING THE ELEMENTS
OF ARCHIPELAGO ACCOMMODATION AS DISCUSSED WITH INDONESIA
AND OTHERS. THE IMMEDIATE REACTION OF THE MALAYSIANS WAS
CONCERN OVER INCLUSION OF NATUNA ISLAND WHICH LIES SOME
85 MILES OFF THE COAST. AFTER WE FULLY EXPLAINED
OUR CONCEPT OF ARCHIPELAGIC PASSAGE, HOWEVER,
THEY APPEARED TO BE SATISFIED IN THIS REGARD. THEY INDICATED
SATISFACTION WITH THE 1 TO 5 LAND-WATER RATIO, AND INDEED
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IMPLIED THAT THEY HOPED THE US WOULD NOT ENLARGE THIS RATIO.

ALTHOUGH THE SUBJECT WAS NOT SPECIFICALLY DISCUSSED THERE WAS NO INDICATION THAT MALAYSIA IS CONSIDERING A COMMON ARCHIPELAGO WITH INDONESIA. YEOP MENTIONED THAT MALAYSIA HAD SUPPORTED ARCHIPELAGO CONCEPT, BUT SEEMED TO AGREE THAT THIS DID NOT PREVENT THEM FROM PRESSING FOR ADEQUATE TRANSIT RIGHTS.

3. IN DISCUSSING STRAITS THE MALAYSIANS STATED THAT WHILE OTHERS HAVE DEMANDED PERMISSION, THEY HAVE ASKED ONLY FOR NOTIFICATION. THEY DO UNDERSTAND THAT MALACCA IS TOO SHALLOW TO PERMIT SUBMERGED SUBMARINE TRANSIT. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION THE ATTORNEY GENERAL INDICATED THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THE REASONS WHY THE US AND OTHER MAJOR POWERS COULD NOT ACCEPT A NOTIFICATION REGIME AND SUGGESTED AN ENUMERATION OF RESTRICTIONS ON TRANSITING VESSELS TO PROTECT THE SECURITY OF THE COASTAL STATE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO NOTIFICATION. AS IN PRIOR CONVERSATIONS THE ATTORNEY GENERAL INDICATED THAT THIS IS A MOST SENSITIVE POLITICAL QUESTION WITHIN MALAYSIA. HE IMPLIED, HOWEVER, THAT HE WOULD SEEK INTERNALLY A RECONSIDERATION OF THEIR POSITION ON NOTICE WHEN HE RETURNS IN MID-JULY.

4. THE MALAYSIANS APPEAR WILLING TO ACCEPT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CONTROL OF POLLUTION, ASSUMING SPECIAL STANDARDS FOR MALACCA CAN BE INTERNATIONALLY APPROVED. WHILE EMPHASIZING THEIR EXTREMELY VULNERABLE POSITION INSOFAR AS SUSTAINING REAL INJURIES TO THEIR COASTLINE AND FISHING INDUSTRY BY REASON OF POLLUTION, THEY SUGGESTED A SYSTEM OF COMPENSATION BY MEANS OF INSURANCE WHICH WOULD PROVIDE THEM IMMEDIATE AND DIRECT PAYMENTS IN THE CASE OF ANY SUCH DAMAGE.

5. IN REFERENCE TO THE GENERAL DEBATE WHICH IS NOW TAKING PLACE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL NOTED THAT MOST OF THE STATEMENTS ARE BEING MADE FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION.

6. THE ATTORNEY GENERAL STATED THAT ANY NEW POSITIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE DISCUSSED THOROUGHLY WITH FRIENDS AND IN PARTICULAR, INDONESIA. HE EMPHASIZED THIS FRIENDSHIP AND IMPLIED THAT IT MAY BE OF HELP IN REACHING A SOLUTION.
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7. AT THE TERMINATION OF OUR DISCUSSION MR. YEOP ASKED ONCE AGAIN HOW ESSENTIAL WAS THE QUESTION OF NON-NOTIFICATION IN THE US POSITION. WE SAID THAT IT WAS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL AND THAT THE QUESTION RELATED NOT ONLY TO THE STRAITS ISSUE BUT TO THE ISSUE OF WHETHER THERE COULD BE A TREATY OR NOT. WE NOTED THAT THE SAME POSITION WAS HELD BY THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER MARITIME POWERS.

8. EVALUATION: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL IS VERY SOPHISTICATED
AND, WE BELIEVE, WOULD BE PREPARED TO REACH A
REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION ON STRAITS WHEN HE BELIEVES THE
TIME IS RIGHT, ASSUMING INDONESIA IS PREPARED TO GO ALONG.
HE SEEMS A BIT CONCERNED ABOUT COORDINATION WITH MALAYSIA'S
OTHER CO-SPONSORS ON STRAITS (SPAIN, GREECE, ETC.), BUT
THIS IS PROBABLY NOT A DECISIVE FACTOR.
STEVENSON

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